

NEWS RELEASE
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ISTOOK SPENDING CUTS APPROVED

Washington, D.C. - House and Senate negotiators, prompted by Rep. Ernest Istook, (R-OK), agreed Thursday night to cut \$190-million in spending and fee hikes from the 1995 budget. Istook on Thursday had offered a motion to reduce the size of an earlier agreement between the House and the Senate. By a vote of 234-192, the House adopted Istook's proposal that additional cuts be made. 65 Democrats joined 169 Republicans to support Istook's motion.

That forced negotiators to meet again, and reach a new compromise to cut \$160 million in spending, and eliminate \$30-million of planned fee increases. As one of the negotiators, Istook met until late Thursday night with a group that included Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey (D-Wis.).

"I appreciate the cooperation of colleagues on both sides of the aisle. This proves Congress can cut spending if someone makes the effort," Istook said. "The \$190-million is a substantial amount of money, even by federal standards. It's not everything I wanted to cut. Still, it's a big improvement."

The spending will be cut from federal construction of courthouses and office buildings, which have been criticized as overpriced and excessive. The user fees are IRS fees charged to provide extra copies of tax returns, and for persons paying back taxes in installments.

The bill is expected to pass the House early next week, and then the Senate, with the cuts intact.